

PUBLIC NOTICE

A public comment period for the EWP Concept Proposal for Water Acquisition on Lower Clear Creek is now open and will run through August 5, 2005. The Ecosystem Restoration Program Selection Panel met in October, 2004 and recommended that the EWP move forward to develop a Full Proposal for review and funding consideration. The ERP Selection Panel's recommendation and the full document can be viewed at <http://www.calfedewp.org/Documents.asp>. Comments should be directed to Campbell Ingram at Campbell_ingram@fws.gov, or mailed to 2800 Cottage Way, Rm. W2605, Sacramento, CA 95825.

Project Background:

Working with a large stakeholder group and agency biologists from BOR, FWS, DFG, NOAA-Fisheries, the EWP has developed a conceptual proposal for a large scale adaptive management experiment to release medium high flows in an attempt to restore basic geomorphic processes and ecological functions to Lower Clear Creek. The overall vision of the project is to release timely discharges of sufficient magnitude, duration and frequency, to reactivate fluvial geomorphic processes. These processes are fundamental to re-create and maintain the diverse template of habitats required in the Clear Creek ecosystem to support and to recover aquatic and riparian species, particularly anadromous salmonids and native floodplain vegetation.

Specifically, the project will attempt to create medium high flows in the range of 4,000 to 6,000 cfs, for two to three days, three times over the next ten years. High flows would be achieved through re-operation of Whiskeytown Dam. The Program is currently working with the Bureau of Reclamation Technical Service Center to analyze hydrologic feasibility, dam safety and flood risks associated with a re-operation of the dam.

The concept proposal was peer reviewed by 6 recognized scientists, and 6 representatives from other water management programs. The proposal was subsequently approved by the CALFED Ecosystem Restoration Program Selection Panel to move forward with further analysis in a Full Proposal. The Full Proposal will include a project management plan (including environmental compliance), a water acquisition plan (including operating criteria and negotiated agreements) and an adaptive management and monitoring plan. The development of the full proposal is expected to take 18 months. The public will have opportunity to comment on the Full Proposal as well as the project NEPA/CEQA documentation.